

REMARKS

Claims 1-34 are in the present application. Claims 1, 2, 11, 12, 21, 22, and 30 are amended herewith.

Claims 1, 11, 21, and 30 are amended by clarification amendment. Claims 2, 12, and 22 are amended to correct a matter of form therein, specifically an antecedent informality.

Claims 1-4, 7, 10-14, 17, 20-24, 27, and 30 were rejected in the under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsai et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,617,328 (hereinafter Tsai), in view of Morgan, U.S. Pat. No. 6, 083, 271. This rejection is traversed.

Regarding the Office Action's rejection of claim 1, the Office Action asserts that Tsai teaches receiving a design specification for the design-specific cell, mapping to a (transistor-level) representation of the design-specific cell, the mapping based on the design specification; and evaluating the (transistor-level) representation of the design-specific cell for meeting the design specification. The Office Action cites and relies upon Morgan for teaching transistor-level representation of the design-specific cell.

Claim 1 is amended herewith as indicated above. Claim 1 is amended to further clarify that Applicants' claimed method comprises receiving a design specification for electrical behavior or transistor-level characteristics for the design-specific cell. That is, the design specification relates to the electrical behavior or transistor-level characteristics of the design-specific cell of the IC being designed.

Claim 11, reciting a system for automatically designing an IC design-specific cell, claim 21, reciting a design-specific cell produced by an automated IC design process, and claim 30, reciting a computer storage medium, have each

been amended in a manner similar to claim 1, to clarify that the claimed design specification relates the electrical behavior or transistor-level characteristics of the design-specific cell of the IC being designed. Support for the amendments of claims 1, 11, 21, and 30 is provided in the specification at least at page 9, line 17 - page 11, line 11.

The design specification disclosed by Tsai is related solely to the physical layout of regularly repeated or ordered regions and components on one or more layers of an IC chip. (Tsai, col. 3, ln. 24-27). Thus, it is clear that Tsai is clearly and only directed to the physical layout of the repeated patterns in an IC design, not the electrical behavior or transistor-level characteristics of the design specification as claimed by Applicants.

Therefore, even if the transistor-level disclosure mentioned in Morgan (Applicants do not agree that Morgan teaches anything beyond the existence of a "transistor level") were incorporated into Tsai, it is not seen where the disclosure or suggestion for Applicants' claimed method (claim 1), system (claim 11), design-specific cell (claim 21), and storage medium (claim 30) is established or supported (i.e., proper) by the Office Action's asserted combination of Tsai and Morgan. As discussed above, Tsai does not disclose, suggest, or even contemplate the claimed electrical behavior or transistor-level characteristics of the design specification. Clearly, Applicants claim a method, system, design-specific cell, and storage medium including the design specification for the electrical behavior or transistor-level characteristics for the design-specific cell.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, and similarly worded claims 11, 21, and 30, are patentable over Tsai and Morgan under 35 USC 103(a). Therefore, the reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 11, 21, and 30 is earnestly solicited.

Claims 2-4, 7, and 10 depend from claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit

that claims 2-4, 7, and 10 are patentable over Tsai and Morgan under 35 USC 103(a) for at least the reasons stated above regarding claim 1.

Claims 12-14, 17, and 20 depend from claim 11. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 12-14, 17, and 20 are patentable over Tsai and Morgan under 35 USC 103(a) for at least the reasons stated above regarding claim 1.

Claims 22-24 and 27 depend from claim 21. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 22-24 and 27 are patentable over Tsai and Morgan under 35 USC 103(a) for at least the reasons stated above regarding claim 1.

Newly added claim 31-35 state that the design specification comprises electrical behavior and transistor-level characteristics for said design-specific cell. Support is found in the specification at page 9, line 17 - page 11, line 11.

No new matter is added to the application as a result of the amendments entered herewith.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Office Action's indication of allowable subject matter regarding claims 5, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 25, 26, 28, and 29 if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base and any intervening claims.

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In summary, it is respectfully submitted for the reasons set forth above, that this amendment places the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that claims 1-30 be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. P. Calhoun', written over a horizontal line.

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